

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03
ACDA-10 NSAE-00 PA-02 SS-15 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-15
TRSE-00 SAJ-01 DODE-00 H-02 NSC-05 /081 W
-----251940 047681 /46

R 251839Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5952
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USBERLIN
USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS
AMCONSUL BREMEN
AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMCONSUL STUTTGART

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, GW, US
SUBJECT: RELEASE OF BRANDT-CARTER LETTERS STIRS UP MORE
REACTION

REFS: A. BONN 3401; B. MUNICH) (NOTAL)

BEGIN SUMMARY: THE PUBLICATION OF THE BRANDT-CARTER
LETTERS HAS STIMULATED NEW MEDIA ATTENTION TO THE
CHARGES OF A BRANDT-CIA CONNECTION. THE GENERAL MEDIA
OPINION IS THAT THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT HAS
VINDICATED BRANDT. THE OPPOSITION CDU/CSU SEEMS
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DIVIDED ON THIS SUBJECT, BUT ONE OF ITS SENIOR SPOKES-
MEN HAS SAID THAT THE UNION WILL TAKE NO FURTHER STEPS
IN THIS MATTER. END SUMMARY.

1. THE FEBRUARY 25 FRG PAPERS CARRY GERMAN TEXTS OF
THE BRANDT-CARTER EXCHANGE OF LETTERS CONCERNING AN ALLEGED
BRANDT-CIA CONNECTION. THE EMBASSY HAS PREPARED

INFORMAL TRANSLATIONS OF BOTH TEXTS:

A. LETTER FROM BRANDT TO PRESIDENT CARTER,
DATED FEBRUARY 20:

QUOTE - DEAR MR. PRESIDENT:

I NOTED FROM YESTERDAY'S PRESS AGENCY REPORTS
THAT MY NAME HAS BEEN CITED IN CONNECTION WITH
THE PAYMENT OF CIA MONEY. THE ASSERTION IN
THESE REPORTS IS UNTRUE. AT NO TIME HAVE I
RECEIVED SUCH FUNDS, NEITHER FOR MY PARTY
NOR FOR ANY OTHER PURPOSE. I EMPHATICALLY
PROTEST THESE FALSE ASSERTIONS, AND I MUST
ASK THAT YOU HAVE THE COMPETENT PART OF
YOUR GOVERNMENT ISSUE THE NECESSARY CLARIFICA-
TION. I AM SORRY THAT OUR FIRST CONTACT HAS
NO BETTER SUBJECT MATTER. WITH HIGH REGARDS,
I AM, YOURS, WILLY BRANDT. UNQUOTE

B. LETTER FROM PRESIDENT CARTER, DATED FEBRUARY 22:

QUOTE - DEAR MR. CHANCELLOR:

I, TOO, AM DEEPLY TROUBLED, AND I REGRET
THE RECKLESS ACCUSATIONS AGAINST YOU WHICH
HAVE APPEARED IN OUR PRESS. I CAN VERY WELL
UNDERSTAND YOUR OUTRAGE OVER THESE PRESS
CANARDS WHICH APPEAR AGAIN AND AGAIN. AS
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A GOVERNMENT, WE MUST UNFORTUNATELY RESIST
THE TEMPTATION TO COMMENT ON EVERY REPORT
OF INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES. I WOULD LIKE TO
CONVEY TO YOU MY PERSONAL REGRETS OVER THE
GREAT INCONVENIENCE WHICH THESE PRESS REPORTS
MAY HAVE CAUSED. I WISH IT WERE IN MY POWER
TO PREVENT IN ADVANCE THESE BASELESS
ACCUSATIONS AGAINST YOUR PERSON, BUT THIS IS
A PRICE WHICH WE MUST PAY FOR THE FORM OF
GOVERNMENT TO WHICH WE ARE BOTH COMMITTED.
PLEASE ACCEPT MY HIGHEST REGARDS. I FEEL
COMFORTED BY THE KNOWLEDGE THAT YOUR OUT-
STANDING REPUTATION AS STATESMAN AND PARTY
LEADER CAN NOT BE SHAKEN BY BASELESS RUMORS.
YOURS, JIMMY CARTER UNQUOTE

2. SOME PAPERS ALSO REPORT COMMENTS BY BAHR THAT THE
PRESIDENT'S LETTER IS A GESTURE OF EXTRAORDINARY
SIGNIFICANCE, AND LEAVES NOTHING FURTHER TO

BE SAID. THE INDEPENDENT "SEUDDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG" RAN A LONG ACCOUNT OF PRIOR CHARGES THAT BRANDT HAD TAKEN CIA MONEY, AND REPORTED THAT THE SPD HEADQUARTERS IS UNWILLING TO EXCLUDE THE POSSIBILITY THAT, IN THE EARLY POSTWAR YEARS, AND PARTICULARLY IN BERLIN, THE PARTY

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HAD RECEIVED FUNDS FROM ORGANIZATIONS WHICH WERE CO-FINANCED BY THE CIA. THE PAPER QUOTES BAHR IN THIS REGARD AS SAYING THAT "IF THERE WERE SUCH PAYMENTS, THEN AT LEAST ... BRANDT KNEW NOTHING OF THEM AND NEVER RECEIVED A PENNY." BAHR SHOWED NO DESIRE TO PURSUE THIS QUESTION FURTHER.

3. THE OPPOSITION CDU/CSU HAS SHOWN DIFFERENT

REACTIONS TO THE PUBLICATION OF THE BRANDT-CARTER
LETTERS. THE CDU/CSU FRAKTION SPOKESMAN, ACKERMANN,
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SAID THAT THE UNION "PLANS NO FURTHER ACTIVITIES" AND
THAT "NATURALLY SUCH A STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT ALSO
CARRIES WEIGHT WITH US." OTHERS CONTINUE TO SPEAK OF
THE NEED FOR BONN TO ASK WASHINGTON FOR "DOCUMENTS"
BEARING ON CLAIMS THAT BRANDT TOOK CIA MONEY. THE CSU
LAND HEADQUARTERS REPORTEDLY SAID THAT "WITH ALL
RESPECT" THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER DID NOT OFFSET THE
NEED FOR A THOROUGH AIRING OF ALL THAT HAD HAPPENED IN PAST
DECADES OF CIA ACTIVITY. CDU/CSU DEPUTY FRAKTION
LEADER WINDELEN CALLED THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER "A
SUBJECTIVE REACTION" AND SAID THAT THE QUESTION
REMAINS AS TO WHETHER THERE IS EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT THE
CHARGE AGAINST BRANDT.

4. THE PRESS HAS COMMENTED FAVORABLY ON THE
PRESIDENT'S LETTER. MANY BELIEVE THAT IT HAS PUT AN
END TO THE "BRANDT AFFAIR."

A. THE PRO-SPD "NEUE RHEIN ZEITUNG" PRAISED THE
PRESIDENT FOR REACTING SO QUICKLY, AND DECLARED THAT
ONE MUST NOW ASSUME BRANDT'S INTEGRITY IN THIS CASE. THE PAPER
SUGGESTED THAT THESE "HELPFUL CANARDS" MIGHT TEACH ALL
PARTIES HOW DUBIOUS AND UNFAIR IT IS TO USE
INSINUATIONS FOR POLITICAL PURPOSES, WHETHER DIRECTED
AT BRANDT OR STRAUSS.

B. THE "SEUDDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG" WROTE THAT IT REMAINS
TO BE SEEN WHETHER CARTER'S LETTER WILL LAY TO REST THE
RUMORS AGAINST BRANDT, GIVEN THEIR LONG HISTORY. THE
PAPER THOUGHT THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD ONLY "INDIRECTLY"
MET BRANDT'S REQUEST FOR "NECESSARY CLARIFICATION."

C. THE INDEPENDENT "WESTFAELISCHE ALLGEMEINE
ZEITUNG" DECLARED THAT INNOCENCE MUST BE ASSUMED UNTIL
GUILT IS PROVEN, AND THAT REPETITION OF VAGUE CHARGES
AGAINST BRANDT DOES NOT CONSTITUTE PROOF OF
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GUILT. THE PAPER ARGUED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER WOULD NOT
HAVE SENT BRANDT SUCH A CLEAR LETTER IF THERE HAD BEEN
A TRACE OF SUSPICION AGAINST HIM. IT URGED THE CDU/CSU
TO REFLECT ON THIS POINT.

D. THE PRO-CDU "RHEINISCHE POST" OPINED THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD NOT GIVEN BRANDT FULL SATISFACTION BECAUSE HE DID NOT EXPLICITLY STATE THAT BRANDT HAD NOT RECEIVED MONEY FROM THE CIA. HOWEVER, THE PAPER CONCLUDED THAT THE "STRONGEST MAN IN THE WEST HAS NOW CLEARED BRANDT OF AN EVIL CHARGE", AND ONE MUST WAIT TO SEE WHETHER THE VETERAN EXPOSERS OF WATERGATE AND THE CIA WILL ACCEPT THIS "VERDICT" FROM THE WHITE HOUSE. STOESEL

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Sent Date: 25-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
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Disposition Event:
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Document Unique ID: 00
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Executive Order: N/A
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Film Number: D770066-0934
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From: BONN
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